National Register of Historic Places Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only received JUL 1 9 1983

date entered

See instructions in <i>How</i> Type all entries—comple		egister Forms		
1. Name				
historic Laurel Hill	Presbyterian Chur	ch		
and/or common				
2. Location				
street & number East c	orner of the junct	ion of SR 132	21 and SR 1323	not for publication
city, town	<u>X</u>	$_$ vicinity of $^{ m L}$	aurinburg	
state North Carol	ina code 037	county	Scotland	code 165
3. Classific	ation			
object in pr	lic X oc ate ur N Cquisition Acces X ye	ccupied noccupied ork in progress ssible es: restricted es: unrestricted	Present Use agriculture commercial educational entertainment government industrial military	museum park X private residence X religious scientific transportation other:
4. Owner of	Property			
	cMillan, Clerk of esbyterian Church	the Session	La Ro	e Rev. John Miller urel Hill Church ute 4, Box 43 urinburg, N. C. 28352
city, town Laurel Hil	1	vicinity of	state	N. C. 27611
	of Legal De			
courthouse, registry of dee	ds, etc. Scotland C	ounty Courtho	ouse	
street & number				
city, town Lauri	nburg		state	N. C. 28352
6. Represer	ntation in E	xisting S	Surveys	
An Inventory of Arc	chitectural and His	torical Resou	irces in Scotland C	
title Unpublished manuscr date 1980-1982	ipt and collected			e county local
depository for survey recor	ds Survey and Pla Division of Ar			istoric Preservation Section N.C

7. Description

Condition

___ excellent

_X fair

____ deteriorated ____ ruins

unexposed

Check one unaltered X altered

Check one
X original site
X moved date

Community Hut moved 1925
Ferguson Study moved 1947

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

Laurel Hill Presbyterian Church, Manse and their associated buildings, are sheltered in a natural grove of water oak, scarlet oak, magnolia and other trees complemented by planted shrubs at the intersection of SR 1321 and SR 1323. The church faces northwest to SR 1321 which in part follows the Great Stage road; Laurel Hill was a principal stop between Fayetteville (N.C.) to the northeast and Cheraw (S.C.) to the southwest. A church serving the congregation of Presbyterian Highland Scots has existed at this site since the Eighteenth Century serving as the focus of both religious and social ceremony. The present church, the third church erected for the congregation and the centerpiece of the complex being nominated, is a handsome vernacular Greek Revival building. A brick veneer passage connects it to the two- story frame educational building, recessed behind the church and parallel to its northeast side elevation. (That educational building was destroyed by fire on February 6, 1983.) Two buildings of historical and cultural significance were moved onto the church grounds in this century from their original sites in the community. The oldest of these is the small study of the Rev. Angus N. Ferguson who served as minister of Laurel Hill Church from 1871 until his death in 1906. The study originally stood on his nearby farm which was dismantled in this century and offered to the church. The larger building, which once served as a school at nearby Snead's Grove, was moved here in 1925 by the Frank L. Johnston Community Club--a women's service club--and now serves as a hut for church suppers and other meetings. Next to it are the barbecue shelter and a covered picnic shelter. The church manse, on the edge of the church property and facing SR 1323, is a one-and-a-half story frame house erected in 1920.

Laurel Hill Church, a handsome weatherboarded two story gable front church was erected in 1856. The following advertisement for the construction of the church appeared in the Fayetteville Observer in January 1856:

"The Trustees will receive proposals until Saturday, March 17, for building a new church at Laurel Hill. Plans and specifics can be had from Major D. K. Monroe or Milton McIntosh."

According to the recently published church history the building was completed in 1856 at a cost of \$2,700. It is thought that the contractor was one Peter Monroe who is known to have been the builder of Bethel Church which shares stylistic similarities.

On the exterior the church remains as built except for three changes. (1) The one story balustraded porch sheltering the paired entrances was removed in the 1880s. (2) At some point the dome covering the cupola was replaced by the present ocatagonal conical roof. A similar dome survives at Bethel Church. Both the porch and the dome can be seen in documentary photographs of Laurel Hill. (3) When the church was completed in 1856 there was a separate stair to the south balcony for

8. Significance

1400-1499 1500-1599 1600-1699 1700-1799 1800-1899	Areas of Significance—Carcheology-prehistoricagricultureX architectureartcommercecommunications		landscape architectur law literature military music philosophy politics/government	re religion science sculpture social/ humanitarian theater transportation other (specify) cultural history
Specific dates	1856	Builder/Architect		

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

Laurel Hill Presbyterian Church, a handsome Greek Revival gable front building erected in 1856, is the third church structure erected on these grounds by its congregation who have assembled here since the eighteenth century. The Presbyterian Highland Scots were a very close-knit and devout people and thus their churches served not only as sites of religious observances but also as the social heart of their community. The Scotch Fair was held here until 1871 and was succeeded in later years by the fall Ingathering, an Important in the history of the church and its annual harvest feast and fundraiser. community was Duncan McFarland (1759-1816), a locally prominent planter and politician who gave the land on which the first and subsequent churches were built. Although some minor changes have been effected to Laurel Hill Church-mostly in the nineteenth century-it survives as an important largely intact example of vernacular Greek Revival ecclesiastical architecture and is the oldest church building in Scotland County. Laurel Hill Church's role in the religious life of Scotland County cannot be overstated and is due not just to its own prominence but also to its role as the mother church of at least eight other congregations established in the nineteenth century. The church was used for a short period by Union General William T. Sherman as his headquarters in March 1865 prior to the Battle of Bentonville.

Criteria Assessment:

- A. Although the present building was erected in 1856—long after the settlement of the region by Presbyterian Highland Scots—Laurel Hill Church retains an association with settlement and growth of the region. The men and women who joined to organize the church in 1797 were the most prominent planters and leaders of the area. Their descendants have continued to worship here to the present.
- B. Laurel Hill Church is associated with the life of Duncan McFarland (1759-1816), a prominent landowner, politician and member of the Ninth U.S. Congress who gave the land on which the church stands. His own house, which stood nearby, was used for several years as a manse before being burned by Sherman in March 1865. The church is also associated with the life and career of the locally prominent Rev. Angus N. Ferguson who ministered here to its congregation from 1871 until his death in 1906. His study was moved here in 1947 when his farm was dismantled.
- C. Laurel Hill Church embodies the distinctive and well crafted characteristics of vernacular Greek Revival ecclesiastical architecture. The modest changes to the building do not diminish its power, presence, and significance. The 1920 manse is a representative middle class dwelling of its period.

9. Major B	Bibliographical	l References
Kirkpatrick, G. F	. Laurel Hill Presbyte	rian Church. Laurinburg, (N.C.): N.P. 1931.
Theological Presbyterian	Seminary in Virginia, . 1878-1887.	erianism in North Carolina. Richmond: Union 1966, reprinted from The North Carolina
Trivette. Ruth Jan	ne. Legacy of the Comm	itted. Laurinburg: The Bill Evans Press, 1982.
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slaves. Located in the west corner of the church, it was reached through a door located in the left (westernmost) bay of the southwest side elevation. During the pastorate of the Rev. John H. Dixon (1907-1916) the stair was taken out and the space fitted up as a meeting room for the session. Access to this room was provided by a door connecting it to the vestibule, and the exterior door opening was closed at the bottom and fitted with a window.

The building, resting on a low brick foundation is three bays wide and six bays deep. The northwest (front) elevation has two symmetrically placed entrances on the first story consisting of double leaf, three panel doors flanked by sidelights and surmounted by transoms. In the center of the second story is a three part window holding six-over-six sash in the center with smaller two- overtwo sash at either side.

That window is flanked by openings near the outside edges of the elevation containing six-over-six sash. The doors and window openings have two-part molded Greek Revival surrounds. The blinds have been removed. The boxed gable end is flushly sheathed and contains, at the center, a circular ventilator. Rising above the tympanum and resting on the ridge line of the roof is an octagonal cupola resting on a square base. Each of its elevations contains a window opening with The original dome fitted directly on the molded cornice; six-over-six sash. however, the eaves of the present conical roof now extend over the cornice.

The southwest side elevation of the church has five principal bays having fenestration at each level and the aforementioned sixth bay--once containing a door for slaves to the balcony--now holding a small window at the first story level only. The tall window openings at the first story level have nine-over-nine sash while the shorter openings above contain six-over-six sash. The opposite northeast side elevation has a five bay division duplicating the above arrangement. Most of the first story rear elevation is occupied by a shed addition--containing the choir practice/robing room which abuts the brick covered passage extending from the east corner of the church to the northeast to connect to the educational building. The second story has a pair of windows which repeat those on the front elevations. elevation has flush molded eaves. The interior of the church--once a single space -- was modified in the late nineteenth century when a vestibule was created in the space between the paired corner stairs. Single doors were placed opposite the front doors in the partition wall. The sancturary follows a double aisle plan and is sheathed with flush horizontal boards and has a Greek Revival finish. Plaster has been applied over the original flush ceiling. The gallery carrying across the rear of the church and along the side elevations is supported by symmetrically placed octagonal columns and is enclosed by a flat paneled balustrade. The pews on the first story are replaced while those in the gallery are original to the building's construction. The lantern is reached by a stair which rises from the balcony in a single flight above the tripartite window at the back of the balcony.

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The chancel has two raised stages with a communion table at the front (lower) stage and the pulpit, flower stands, and ministers's chairs on the brick (higher) stage. Octagonal columns stand against the wall at the back of the chancel and enframe a large blind panel hung with draperies. The blind panel balustrade which carries across the front of the balcony is continued across the southeast chancel wall--above the cornice. There is a four panel door--under the balcony--connecting the choir room with the south choir. It would appear that door replaces an earlier window which in elevation is directly below the second story window. Its companion first story window remains in place under the opposite balcony. A door has been cut into the wall between the east choir and the chancel and connects the sanctuary with the passage leading to the educational building.

The rectangular flat roof brick passage way has a hall across the northwest front and the Maggie R. Monroe Room (the ladies bible class), men's and ladies washrooms, a storage room, a cross hall along the southeast rear elevation. This passage is built on three levels. The passage's front northwest elevation has a three bay division with a central entrance holding paired doors opening onto a porch. There are window openings in the outside bays. The passage way was built to connect the church with the educational building.

Groundbreaking for the building was held on 5 July 1953. The building was dedicated on 2 June 1957. H. F. Monroe was chairman of the building committee which oversaw the construction of the two story weatherboarded frame structure. The first story was given over to classrooms and storage. The front two-thirds of the second story was occupied by a large Fellowship Hall with a kitchen and two classrooms behind it in the east end. The second story was destroyed by fire February 1983. Although the first story classrooms did not burn they were extensively damaged by water and debris.

The Community Hut is a one-story weatherboarded gable front turn-of-thecentury frame structure with a full facade porch sheltering the central entrance opening into a large dining room. Like-size one-room ells, covered by gabled roofs, occupy the rear half of the side elevations giving the structure a T-plan. The building rests on brick piers in-filled with cement blocks.

A door in the center of the northwest front elevation of the north ell is reached by a flight of steps rising to a platform porch. A full facade addition has been built across the front northwest elevation of the south ell and contains men's and ladies' restrooms separated by a hall which connects to the second kitchen here in the south ell. The ells have paired six-over-six sash windows in

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the center of their gable ends. There is a quartet of symmetrically placed openings also holding six-over-six sash across the rear southeast elevation of the hut. The window and door surrounds are made of plain brick.

The interior of the dining room and the flanking kitchens are finished with a vertically sheathed wainscot below the chair rail and particle board above it. The doors from the dining rooms into the flanking kitchens have five horizontal panels each.

North of, and parallel to, the hut are two simple shelters covered with gabled roofs. The smaller one, also nearest to the hut, shelters a brick and block pit for the cooking of barbecue. It has sawn board counters on its southwest, northwest, and northeast elevations. The larger shelter, parallel to and north of the barbecue shelter, is of sawn pole construction and was apparently built for picnics. Its northeast elevation is weatherboarded. It was doubled in size with an open-sided extension to the southeast in recent years.

Rev. Ferguson's study, a modest one room one story frame building covered with board and batten and a gabled roof stands due southeast behind the church. The study was moved onto the church property in 1947 and rehabilitated as a memorial to Rev. Ferguson. A replacement hipped roof porch shelters the entrance and window on the front northwest elevation. A replacement common bond brick chimney stands in the center of the southwest elevation while single window openings occur in the center of the northeast and southeast elevations. All window openings contain six-over-six sash. The four panel door is apparently original to the structure. The interior walls of the study are sheathed with vertical pine sheathing installed following the move; the floor is carpeted, and the ceiling covered with celotex.

The pastors of Laurel Hill Church, both stated and supply, were responsible for their own residence until the construction of the present manse in 1920. The Rev. James P. McPherson had occupied the former residence of Duncan McFarland from 1856 until February 1865. It was burned by Sherman's troops in March 1865. After the war when the congregation was served by the Rev. Angus N. Ferguson from 1871 until his death in 1906, Ferguson lived on his farm nearby. In 1920 a tract of land was purchased, adjacent to the church lands, on which the present manse was built. It was first occupied by the Rev. Frank L. Johnston (-1921) who came to Laurel Hill as minister in the Spring of 1920 and served for just over a year until his premature death in June 1921.

The weatherboarded frame manse, one and a half stories in height, has a rectangular gabled roof core with ells of varying depth on each of its four elevations. The house was erected on brick piers which have since been infilled with cement blocks. There are unequal sized ells positioned at either end of the

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southwest front elevation. The larger of the two, at the south end, shelters the porch, and is supported by full height brick piers connected by a balustrade. The porch is now screened. Its gable front is covered with flat edge wood shingles and contains a triangular headed ventilator. The eaves of this and the other ells are supported by bungalow style triangular brackets. A circular device is set at the apex of each gable. The ells on the southeast and northwest gable ends of the house occur at the rear of the elevation. There are rectangular shaped ventilators in each gable. Two partially engaged brick chimneys stand on the southeast elevation providing fireplaces for the living room and dining room. On the opposite northwest gable end the front part of the elevation is sheltered by a shed porch supported by brick piers. A door in the center of this elevation opens into a hall which carries through the center of the house almost directly below the roof's ridge line. The kitchen ell on the northeast rear elevation is covered with a hipped roof; a shed roof porch carries along its northwest elevation. There is also a hipped roof dormer in the center of the elevation. The house's single and triple window openings contain either six-over-one sash or ten pane casements. The surrounds are formed of plain boards.

The interior of the manse has a simple finish of pine floors, sheetrocked walls, and plain board surrounds with a narrow edging across the top of the lintel. Most of the doors have a six horizontal panel arrangement except for the fifteen pane french doors connecting the living and dining rooms. The front door opens into the front center hall with the living room to the right and a study to the left. The hall terminates in the rear stair hall. Almost midway, on the left, it connects with the long side hall (under the ridge line) which provides access to the bedrooms on either side. The dining room, as noted earlier, is behind the living room. Behind it are the breakfast room and kitchen. The fireplaces in the house were fitted with simple mantels and coal grates. Those in the living and dining rooms survive: others have been removed. On the second floor there is one large finished bedroom with a closet, occupying for the most part the space under the dormer. The large space under the gabled roof is a floored attic.

There are two simple frame outbuildings behind the house. The larger of the two covered with a gabled roof was built as a garage. It has vertical board siding and is now used for storage. The smaller building covered with flush horizontal and vertical random siding has a shed roof. It too is used for storage. Neither building is of consequence.

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The Laurel Hill Presbyterian church was founded in 1797 in what was then Richmond County and is now Scotland County. The congregation has been housed in three separate buildings, the most recent of which was completed in 1856. Laurel Hill is one of the oldest churches in the Fayetteville Presbytery and has been the mother church of a number of other congregations.

North Carolina's upper Cape Fear Valley, including Richmond County, was heavily settled by Scottish highlanders beginning in the 1730s. This immigration occurred in several waves. The French and Indian War slowed down the movement but following its conclusion in 1763 highlander immigration picked up again, peaking in 1773. After a hiatus caused by the Revolution immigration revived in the last decade of the eighteenth century. These highlanders were "among the most substantial and energetic people of Scotland," characteristics which they carried into Richmond County. I

Most of these Scotch settlers were Presbyterians and they brought their church with them. Its development was slow, however, due to a shortage of trained clergy. Unlike other Protestant denominations, the Presbyterians required their clergy to have college training, a requirement difficult to meet in the backwoods of the New World. As a result demand for ministers always exceeded supply in the eighteenth and early nineteenth century. The first church in the Fayetteville Presbytery was organized in 1758. By 1794 there were only six churches and four ministers in the region. Laurel Hill's formal organization in 1797 made it one of the first ten churches in the area. There was, however, "a regularly established preaching appointment in the Laurel Hill community previous to 1790," but no formal structure until Laurel Hill, along with Raft Swamp, Ashpole, and Lumber Bridge petitioned the Presbytery for a minister in March, 1797.

John Gillespie served Laurel Hill as its first minister. He was called in 1797 and resigned in 1801. He was replaced by Malcolm McNair, who served from 1803 until his death in 1822 at the age of 46.4 During this period Laurel Hill's most important member was Duncan McFarland, a farmer and politician. McFarland owned most of the land surrounding the church and donated the land on which the buildings stand. McFarland was elected to the North Carolina House of Commons for the 1792-1793 term. He was later elected to the North Carolina Senate for the terms of 1793-1794, 1795, and 1800. He was an unsuccessful candidate for the United States Congress in 1802, but was elected to that position in 1804. After serving one term in Washington McFarland returned to North Carolina and was elected to the State Senate in 1807, 1808, and 1809. McFarland was a Democrat. He also served as a delegate to the 1789 constitutional convention. 5 McFarland "believed that the town /Laurel Hill/ would one day become . . . a metropolis to rival New York and London. Accordingly he divided hundreds of acres of land into two acres plots for the residential district. Included in his plans was a city of free Negroes."6 McFarland's efforts were to no avail, of course, but he did start the Scotch Fair which was located near the church and was an integral part of the community's life until after the Civil War. McFarland's house was used on occasion as a manse for the church until it was burned during the Civil War. 7

Following the death of McNair, Laurel Hill had difficulties in securing full-time ministers. From 1847 until 1856 the church had no regular minister but made the use of a number of supply ministers. Around 1855 construction began on the third and present

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church building. The first was a log building. The second, built at an undetermined time, was used as a school facility after the construction of the present building. It burned in about 1930. The present building was completed in 1856 at a cost of \$2,700.8

In that same year James McPherson was installed as pastor. His pastorate continued through the Civil War. The church's membership increased during the hostilities reaching a peak of 275 members in 1864, 80 of whom were slaves. During the dying days of the war the church was visited by the invading Union Army of General William Sherman. In March of 1865 Sherman made the church his headquarters for one or two days as his army made its way up from South Carolina in pursuit of the Confederate Army of General Joseph Johnston. Sherman stayed a short time in the area. It was during this period that the McFarland House was burned.

McPherson left Laurel Hill in 1867. In 1871 A. N. Ferguson took over as minister. He retained that position until his death in 1906, making his tenure the longest of any minister in Laurel Hill's history. Early in his pastorate he succeeded in stopping the Scotch Fair. The fair was a great boon to the community in its early years as a gathering place for Scotch settlers from the area. However, by the time of its discontinuance it had become a scene for gambling, horse racing, and extensive drinking. Ferguson led the forces which prevailed upon the legislature to order the cessation of the fair. 10

During this period Laurel Hill lost most of its black members, as the freedmen preferred their own churches. Nonetheless under Ferguson's leadership the church was able to increase its membership from 182 in 1872 to 206 in 1893. However, the creation of nearby churches, largely seeded by Laurel Hill members, reduced the membership to 117 by 1903. 11

After Ferguson's death J. H. Dixon was pastor at Laurel Hill until 1916. The church had a number of ministers in the next few years, including Frank L. Johnston, who was the first pastor to occupy the permanent manse built in 1920. Recent pastors have included G. F. Kirkpatrick 1922-1936, Robert Smith 1937-1939, Frank Goodman 1939-1945, William Thompson 1946-1955, Randolph Terrell 1956-1961, Alton Trivette 1962-1975, and present minister John N. Miller. Laurel Hill has a current membership of approximately 175. Membership has been increasing under the pastorship of Miller. 12

Laurel Hill is the mother church of at least eight other churches in the area. Montpelier was formed in 1852, the first church to draw its membership from Laurel Hill. Laurinburg in 1859, Mark's Creek 1862, Ida Mill's (now Church in the Pines) 1893 and Aberdeen 1894 followed. Chapel Hill Presbyterian Church, Cool Spring Methodist Church, and Silver Hill Presbyterian Church were all formed from Laurel Hill's former slave members around 1875. 13

Presbyterians have worshiped at the site of Laurel Hill for almost two centuries. The church continues to be a religious and social center for the community.

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- ²Jethro Rumple, <u>The History of Presbyterianism in North Carolina</u> (Richmond: Union Theological Seminary in Virginia, 1966, reprinted from <u>The North Carolina Presbyterian</u>, 1878-1887), 28-32.
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- ⁶Bill Sharpe, <u>A New Geography of North Carolina</u> (Raleigh: Sharpe Publishing Company, 4 volumes, 1954-1965), IV, 2068, hereinafter cited as Sharpe, <u>New Geography of North Carolina</u>.
- ⁷Sharpe, New Geography of North Carolina, IV, 2056, 2068; Kirkpatrick, <u>Laurel Hill</u> Presbyterian Church, 9.
- ⁸Kirkpatrick, <u>Laurel Hill Presbyterian Church</u>, 9-10; Telephone interview with Mrs. Alton Trivette, November 24, 1981, notes in file, hereinafter cited as Trivette interview.
- ⁹Kirkpatrick, <u>Laurel Hill Presbyterian Church</u>, 10-11; Trivette interview; John G. Barrett, <u>Sherman's March Through the Carolinas</u> (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1956), 122-123.
 - 10 Kirkpatrick, <u>Laurel Hill Presbyterian Church</u>, 10-12.
 - 11 Kirkpatrick, Laurel Hill Presbyterian Church, 12-13.
 - 12 Kirkpatrick, <u>Laurel Hill Presbyterian Church</u>, 13-16; Trivette interivew.
 - ¹³Trivette interview.

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